



February 6, 2020

Board of Directors  
Ventura Regional Sanitation District  
Ventura, California

**PROPOSED BUDGET ADJUSTMENT TO FUND ONGOING POST-OLIVAS FIRE EMERGENCY WORK AT THE BAILARD LANDFILL**

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- A. Receive and File the Staff report regarding the ongoing response to the Olivas Fire-caused damages at the Bailard Landfill; and
- B. Approve a budget adjustment appropriating \$1,200,000 from VRSD’s reserves for the Bailard Landfill and the appropriate revenue adjustment based on insurance reimbursements.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Emergency expenditures to date at the Bailard Landfill (Landfill), in response to damages from the Olivas Fire, are approximately \$1,000,000. The estimated total cost to complete the emergency mitigation improvements is \$1,200,000. The majority of this cost is anticipated to be covered through insurance reimbursements. The difference will be covered by monies within the Bailard Landfill reserves.

Below is a recap of the District’s updated reserve projections for June 30, 2020 after taking into account allocations for the Tierra Rejada and Bailard fire mitigation efforts:

Restricted Reserves	\$18,082,293
Committed Reserves	\$ 541,957
Assigned Reserves	\$13,328,106
Non-restricted Available Funds	\$ 1,317,124

**BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS**

On October 11, 2019, the Olivas Fire, which started in the Ventura River approximately one quarter of a mile from the Landfill, caused significant damage to the Landfill. During this wildfire event, the Landfill’s gas collection system, drainage conveyances, and mature, vegetated cover were severely impacted. These systems are required in order to control landfill gas emissions; control site drainage; and protect the Landfill cover from erosion from winds and rains. The responsive actions taken since October 11, 2019 can be categorized as follows: repairs to the gas collection system, track-walking of the landfill

slopes, emergency repairs to the cover during the rains, and repair of the drainage system.

### REPAIRS TO THE GAS COLLECTION SYSTEM

The Landfill's gas collection system consists of approximately three miles of HDPE (high density polyethylene) pipe, as well 40 vertical gas wells that were installed throughout the waste footprint of the site. These wells reach the surface and are connected to a series of above-ground pipes that transfer any landfill gas that is generated from the degrading waste to a flare that destroys the methane. Damage to the gas collection system was primarily concentrated to the above-ground pipe, which was completely destroyed, as well as multiple vaults located at the surface which house buried valves and connections for the system. Fortunately, none of the vertical gas wells damaged during the fire.

Staff notified the Ventura County Air Pollution Control District, who oversees the site's permit to operate the flare, that the collection system would be inoperable for a period of time during the repairs. Multiple landfill gas construction firms were brought in to help bring the system back online in a timely manner. New pipes and fittings were procured and field construction staff worked quickly to fuse the pipe together, lay it out properly on the site, and reconnect the wells to the system. The majority of the work on the system was completed by the end of October. As sections of the pipeline were reconnected, the flare had sufficient gas to become operational within approximately one week of the fire. Approximately 15,000 feet of pipe were replaced and reconnected to the flare. Throughout the repair period, staff monitored conditions to ensure that there was no subsurface fire present in the landfill and that emissions of landfill gas were minimal. At no point were subsurface fires or surface emissions detected on the landfill.

### EMERGENCY REPAIRS TO LANDFILL COVER AND DRAINAGE SYSTEMS

Concurrent with gas collection repairs, efforts were directed to track-walking all of the slopes on the 160-acre site. This effort is necessary in order to break the hard crust of the fire ash and work it back into the cover. Following a fire, the ash created from the charred vegetation can form a hard layer that is impermeable. Runoff from a storm event can hit this layer and velocities can quickly increase – creating conditions for significant erosion or surficial slides. This is one of the reasons mudslides often follow wildfires in naturally sloped areas. Site track-walking efforts took approximately six weeks to complete.

Efforts were also necessary to prevent erosion from developing during heavier periods of rain in November and December. The contractor performing the track-walking was present onsite to immediately repair any erosion that started to develop on bare slopes. Fortunately, the majority of the site has revegetated quickly, partly due to track-walking efforts. One of the benefits of working the fire ash back into the soil cover is that it provides nitrogen for accelerating the process of revegetation.

Approximately 1,000 feet of 36-inch HDPE drainage pipe was also destroyed during the fire. This pipe is an essential part of the site's drainage conveyance system. Repairs to the damage and installation of new pipe is currently underway. It is anticipated that these repairs will be completed by the end of February, pending agreeable conditions for construction during this rainy season.

This letter has been reviewed by Legal Counsel as to form.

If you should have any questions or need additional information, please contact me by phone at (805) 658-4600 or email at [ChrisTheisen@vrsd.com](mailto:ChrisTheisen@vrsd.com).

CHRIS THEISEN, GENERAL MANAGER

APPROVED FOR AGENDA:



Chris Theisen, General Manager

Attachments: None

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